

MICHR Editorial Style and Usage Guide

MICHR follows the [Associate Press style guidelines](#) and the [University of Michigan editorial guidelines](#) in communications and our website except where indicated in this guide. Please direct style questions about topics not included in this guide to egf@med.umich.edu.

academic and administrative titles

- Uppercase official titles when used before a name: MICHR Executive Director Dr. Julie Lumeng will attend the conference.
- Use lowercase when citing a title alone: The executive director will welcome the incoming fellows during orientation.
- Lowercase titles when used after a name: Dr. Julie Lumeng, executive director of MICHR, will speak at the event.
- Insert long titles after a person's name whenever possible.
- Drop titles and first names on subsequent references, except when referencing the president: President Ono.

academic degrees

- Omit periods from abbreviations, including academic degrees (MD, BA, BS, MA, PhD, MBA)

academic majors/programs

Lowercase except for majors that are proper nouns: He is enrolled in the nursing program. She is majoring in architecture and Russian and Eastern European studies.

acronyms

Identify an organization name by its initials, in parentheses, after the first occurrence of the spelled-out version *only* if the abbreviation is used later in the piece: The Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation (IHPI) is a co-host of the event. IHPI is working to improve public health through policy.

alumni

- Alumni (plural) and alum (as an informal and gender-neutral singular) are preferred.
- More formal but alumnae (plural female), alumna (female), and alumnus (male) may also be used.

ampersand

Don't use it in body text, such as website articles or Breakthrough, unless it is part of an official name or title. It is okay to use it on posters or in graphic elements or headlines when needed for space or aesthetics. Otherwise, spell out and.

article titles

Place article titles in quotes. Her article, “Prevention of Falls in Older Adults,” was published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

book citations

Space permitting, include the publisher’s name and year in parentheses after the book title. Her recent book is *Engaged: Designing for Behavior Change* (Rosenfeld, 2020). Don’t use the year if it is included elsewhere in the sentence. In 2020, she published *Engaged: Designing for Behavior Change* (Rosenfeld).

century

Use numeric figures and lowercase. Hyphenate as an adjective. The University of Michigan was founded in the 19th century. It is a 21st-century research institution.

city names

- List with the state or country (spelled out and offset by commas), except with the following cities: Ann Arbor, Amsterdam, Atlanta, Baltimore, Beijing, Berlin, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Geneva, Hong Kong, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, London, Luxembourg, Los Angeles, Madrid, Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Mumbai, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Paris, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Rome, St. Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Shanghai, Tokyo, and Toronto.
- Example: After graduation, she moved to New York. He moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, and tried to forget her.

co-

co-author

co-chair

co-director

co-editor

co-founder

co-sponsored

composition titles

Place journal titles, books, movies, and television shows in italics. Chapter and article titles, as well as television episodes, should be in quotation marks. If the sentence is in italics, the titles should not be italicized: *Harper Lee authored* *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

course titles

Capitalize official course titles in the text with no quotation marks. This fall, he is enrolled in Introduction to Midwifery Care. Do not capitalize a generic reference to a course: She teaches courses in reproductive health.

dates

- When using a month and date together, spell out the month: January 2.
- Spell out the month when it is used alone or with a year: Commencement is in May. The book was published in August 2012.
- Do not use “st,” “nd,” or rd.” The event is September 1 in room 326.
- Use a comma after dates included with years. Boise Junior College opened on September 6, 1932, at St. Margaret’s Hall.

days

Do not abbreviate days of the week.

decades

Use numeric figures to indicate decades of history. Form the plural with the letter “s” and no apostrophe. He was born in the late 1950s or early 1960s. Abbreviate the decade (i.e., ’60s) only when used as such in a direct quote.

Dr.

Use only for MD, DDS, DO, or other medical degrees. Do not use for PhDs. Also, do not include both a degree and courtesy title. See also titles and academic and administrative titles.

directions and regions

Lowercase north, east, southwest, etc., unless designating a region. The area of Southeast Michigan is home to Detroit. The event will take place on the east side of the Big House.

email

Not e-mail or E-mail.

faculty

Plural except when used with “member”: Faculty are invited to enroll in the workshop. A tenured faculty member is needed to chair the committee.

Fellow/fellowship

Lowercase, except when part of a proper noun: She is a Skadden Fellow. She received a Skadden Fellowship. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

healthcare

Use “healthcare” one word unless in the official title of an organization that uses “health care.”

MICHR

- Use the Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research (MICHR) on the first mention and MICHR after unless the communication is going ONLY to MICHR faculty and staff. Then it is okay to use just the MICHR abbreviation.
- MICHR's official tagline is "Accelerating health solutions to those who need them through innovation and discovery" and because it is not a full sentence, it should be used without a period at the end when on the website, posters, etc.
- See "MICHR Boilerplate_May 2024.docx" for a standard description of MICHR.

MICHR Programs

See "MICHR Boilerplate_May 2024.docx" for program titles, abbreviations, and descriptions.

money

Use a dollar sign and omit ".00." Do not write out "dollar." The campaign goal is \$175 million.

months

Do not abbreviate months of the year.

more than

Always use "more than" instead of "over" when referring to quantity. MICHR has more than 10,000 proud alumni.

names

On first reference, use full name: John Smith. On subsequent references, use last name only: Smith. Never use a courtesy title: Mr. Smith. Do not use a first name on subsequent reference except in a quote or when multiple people with the same last name are referenced in a story.

name suffixes

Do not use commas before Jr., Sr., II, III, etc. The Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Celebration is in January.

news/media outlets

- Capitalize and do not italicize TV and radio networks: NBC, WJR, NPR.
- Capitalize and italicize print publications: *The New York Times*, *Detroit Free Press*.
- Capitalize and do not italicize wire services: Associated Press, Reuters.
- Capitalize and italicize blogs: *The Incidental Economist*, *SCOTUSblog*.

numbers

- Write numbers one through nine and use numeric figures for numbers 10 and greater. Exceptions are ages, measurements, and percentages. Her two daughters are 1 month old and 3 years old. He is 6 feet 2 inches tall.

- Do not begin a sentence with a numeral, except for a year: 2009 was a banner year. Twenty students participated in the program.

passive voice

Avoid whenever possible: MICHR will accept applications until September 12. (NOT: Applications will be accepted until September 12.)

percentages

Spell out “percent” in text and use numeric figures: The class was at 95 percent capacity. Use the percent symbol (%) in tables and graphics.

punctuation

- Use a **serial comma**, also called an Oxford comma, before the last “and” or “or” in a list. I like bacon, eggs, and toast for breakfast. His favorite sandwiches include peanut butter, ham and cheese, and tuna.
- Use a **semicolon** to clarify a series that includes a number of commas: “Parts for the carrier are made in Tampa, Fla.; Austin, Texas; and Baton Rouge, La.”
- Use a **colon** when introducing lists. Capitalize the first letter of a sentence that follows a colon and lowercase the first letter of an incomplete sentence that follows a colon.
- Use an **em-dash (—)** with a space on either side to indicate an abrupt change in thought or to set off text. The groom — a bundle of nerves wrapped in a tuxedo — awaited his bride at the altar.
- Use an **en-dash (–)** to indicate a numerical range. 1993–1996.
- Use an **ellipsis (…)** (a series of three periods with a space on either side) to indicate an omission from a text or quotation. One can be used at the beginning, inside, or at the end of a sentence.
- Avoid **exclamation points** except when part of a quotation.
- Place a period or comma inside **quotation marks**. Place a question mark, dash, or semicolon outside quotation marks except when they apply to the quoted matter (as in dialogue). “I am appalled,” she said. “Do you think it’s fair to sum this up by saying ‘All’s well that ends well’?”

says/said

Use “says” in stories on the website and in Breakthrough unless a good reason for using “said.”

seasons

Lowercase except as part of a title. They started working at MICHR in the spring 2016 semester. Each spring, students sponsor the Spring Fling event.

spaces

Use only one space after periods, commas, or colons.

states

- Spell out the full name of the state when using it with a city (and offset it with commas) or on its own: She came to MICHR from Angola, Indiana, and thinks Ann Arbor is a wonderful place.
- Lowercase “state” when referring to a state in general; uppercase when referring to the state government. He will move to New York state after graduation. The university receives less than 3 percent of its budget from the State of Michigan.

the

Unless it is the first word in a sentence or part of an official title, “the” should not be capitalized in running text: John attends the University of Michigan. (NOT: John attends The University of Michigan.)

time

- Lowercase abbreviations with periods: 12:30 p.m., 3 p.m., 10:05 a.m.
 - Posters and in programs, use uppercase abbreviations, 5 P.M.
- Use “to” in articles to denote a time range: The program will be held from 3 to 4 p.m. His presidency came after his service as secretary from 1987 to 1997.
 - Posters and programs, use en dash offset by spaces: Noon – 5 p.m.
- Do not use :00 if an event starts or ends on the hour.
- Avoid 12 p.m. and 12 a.m. Use noon or midnight.

titles

- Official research project titles: place in quotation marks
- lectures, programs, talks, symposia: place in quotation marks

translational science

- Translational science is lowercase unless at the beginning of a sentence or in a presentation, poster, or project title.
- See [our website](#) and “MICHR Boilerplate_May 2024.docx” for examples of how we discuss translational science.

U-M

For external audiences, spell out the complete name the first time you refer to it unless the context and nature of the document require an abbreviation (e.g., in an advertisement). Note the use of hyphens in both the long and abbreviated forms.

- the University of Michigan
- the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor (hyphen)
- the University of Michigan-Dearborn (hyphen)
- the University of Michigan-Flint (hyphen)

Unless it is the first word in a sentence or part of an official title, ‘the’ should not be capitalized in running text.

- John attends the University of Michigan.
- NOT John attends The University of Michigan.

Abbreviations for the University of Michigan and its campuses.

- U-M (hyphen)
- UM-Ann Arbor (hyphen)
- UM-Dearborn (hyphen)
- UM-Flint (hyphen)

Note the elimination of the hyphen from the abbreviated form when a campus designation is used: UM-Dearborn, NOT U-M-Dearborn. Although U-M is usually pronounced “U of M” when spoken, this abbreviation should not be used in written text.

Use of the article “the” is optional with the abbreviated form of the university name:

- John attends the U-M.
- John attends U-M.

Because it can cause confusion with the state of Michigan, avoid referring to U-M as “Michigan” unless the context is obvious. For example, in this sentence: “Michigan donors can take advantage of a new tax law that allows deductions for charitable gift annuities,” is it the university or the state of Michigan that is being referenced?

university

Lowercase except when part of a proper noun: The University of Michigan boasts many proud alums. I graduated from the university and now work there, too.

web addresses

- No http:// and no “www”: michr.umich.edu.
- Periods should be used at the end of every sentence, even if that sentence ends in a web address.